

# DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 086 584

SO 006 758

**AUTHOR** Schnucker, Robert V.  
**TITLE** The Success of Individualized Independent Instruction in a World Civilization Class.  
**PUB DATE** [73]  
**NOTE** 47p.  
  
**EDRS PRICE** MF-\$0.65 HC-\$3.29  
**DESCRIPTORS** \*Autoinstructional Methods; Course Descriptions; Course Evaluation; Educational Strategies; Higher Education; \*History Instruction; \*Individualized Instruction; \*Multimedia Instruction; Programed Instruction; Relevance (Education); Student Needs; \*Western Civilization; World History

## ABSTRACT

This program document describes and evaluates an individualized independent instruction course in world civilizations, constructed on the following guidelines: 1) treatment of the student as an individual; 2) emphasis on student learning rather than teaching; 3) removal of grade pressures; 4) use of self-paced materials to achieve the first two points; and, 5) use of the library as a classroom and learning environment. Students were allowed to choose from a number of individualized learning systems supported by a number of materials which included a textbook, study manual, films, slide-cassette programs, film loops, games, artifacts, and materials for the individual. The course is organized into 15 weekly units per semester with activities and procedures to determine progress such as personal interviews, weekly objective texts, essays, and oral exams. Class discussion sessions are optional. The appended evaluation instrument is discussed and compared at different dates of administration and with compatible evaluation data. The results encourage the continuation of independent self-instruction in history. (JH)

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPY.  
RIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Robert V. Schnucker  
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING  
UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL IN-  
STITUTE OF EDUCATION FURTHER REPRO-  
DUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM RE-  
QUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT  
OWNER.

THE SUCCESS OF  
INDIVIDUALIZED INDEPENDENT INSTRUCTION  
IN A WORLD CIVILIZATION CLASS

ROBERT V. SCHNUCKER  
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY & RELIGION  
NORTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY  
KIRKSVILLE, MISSOURI

63501

Some history departments are undergoing a number of disquieting experiences. Their enrollments are down; their education majors have considerable difficulty securing a teaching job; and there appears to be a growing attitude among incoming students that history is irrelevant. The attitude of irrelevancy usually causes the historian to cringe and brings about his rejoinder that the cause is in the High School which turns out historical illiterates for whom the world was created and set into motion near the end of the Korean War.

About four years ago I began to experiment with various techniques hoping to find something that would make history relevant for freshman and sophomore students and might reverse the downward trend in enrollment. My experiments ranged from weekly topical essays to the use of visuals to team learning to a five week course to library centered learning. Each experiment had a degree of success, but not to the extent that I wanted to achieve. This paper is a report of a more successful effort in the search to revitalize the history survey course.

The critical problem of my experiments became, how to treat each student as an individual in the learning experience. From this problem there evolved a concern to stress learning rather than teaching. Let me elaborate on this for a few moments. The normal procedure for teaching a course is for the instructor to set the goals the student is to achieve, the method by which the student is to be evaluated, the assignments to be done, the text to be read, the speed of the course's development, and how the course will be taught. The student's role is to fit, to conform to the predetermined pattern. Very little allowance is made for individual student variations. The instructor basically functions as the primary dispenser of knowledge; the lecture becomes the judgmental podium from whence is issued often in quasi-godlike fashion, historical pearls

of wisdom. After all, instructors are paid to teach and students have come to study.

Yet when many of us have used this instructor oriented approach, we have given simultaneous lip service to the pedagogical truth that every student is an individual. Each student has his own set of learning skills; each has his own configuration of interests; each has his own unique background composed of different genes, chromosomes, sibling relationships, community and peer experiences; each has his own career aspirations; increasingly each seems to have his own set of values. Yet as students enter the classroom, most of us disregard the truth of individuality and force them into our own system of teaching. Could it be that the students who level the charge of "irrelevancy" against history or any subject are in fact making more of a protest against the method of learning than the subject to be learned? Would it be possible to present history in such a manner that students would become enthused about learning and might even learn something meaningful about their past?

After pondering this possibility, I selected some guidelines for teaching World Civilization. First I decided to take seriously the fact that every student is an individual and thus must be handled as such. Second I decided that the primary event that should occur in the class was learning rather than teaching. The key to teaching is not how well I think I have taught nor how well the students think I have taught, but what they have learned and what is their attitude toward how and what they have learned. The third guideline was that if the pressure for grades was removed, the students would concentrate more on learning and understanding the subject. Neither students nor instructor would be involved in the game of giving or gaining a grade. My fourth assumption was that some form of self-instruction technique would be a good way to implement and accomplish the first three guidelines. My last guideline was, the best place for the learning to occur was not in a formal classroom but in the library.

With these guidelines or assumptions I then wrote a proposal detailing what I would like to do, the cost, and submitted it to our administration. The administration's response was an enthusiastic endorsement and I immediately began to work. However, there were some decisions that had been made earlier that established some parameters for the proposal. For example, although it was necessary to use Clough, et al. as the main textbook for the course due to a departmental decision, other texts were made available to the students depending upon their individual reading level. No paper-backs were required although some were suggested as optional reading. A second parameter was our two semester academic year with the first semester ending just before Christmas vacation and the second beginning around the middle of January. In light of this, it seemed convenient and sensible to allow for one unit per week for 15 weeks each semester. The problem then became to achieve a balance in subject matter and interpretation. Rather than try to cover as much as possible, as is often done in lecture courses, I decided to concentrate on 15 broad periods of importance in man's development. Once they were chosen, other members of the history staff were consulted to make sure the issues fit into the general schema of the course and were balanced between political, economic, social, intellectual, scientific and religious problems. The topics for Semester I were:

- Unit 1: Some aspects of the historical method and some main philosophies of history
- Unit 2: The Ancient World - the beginnings of civilization
- Unit 3: The Ancient World - Egypt & Mesopotamia
- Unit 4: The Importance of Ancient Judaism for the West
- Unit 5: The Greek Political, Intellectual, and Cultural Heritage
- Unit 6: The Roman Development Through Julius Caesar
- Unit 7: The Roman Empire & Its Decline: The Rise of Christianity
- Unit 8: The Early Middle Ages & The Rise of Islam
- Unit 9: Medieval Culture and the Church
- Unit 10: Waning of the Middle Ages
- Unit 11: The Renaissance and Your World
- Unit 12: The Expansion of Europe
- Unit 13: The Religious Turmoil of the 16th Century
- Unit 14: The Seventeenth Century - Religious and Political Crises
- Unit 15: The Seventeenth Century - Intellectual and Scientific Developments

The topics for Semester II were:

- Unit 1: The Enlightenment
- Unit 2: The Age of Revolution - America and France
- Unit 3: Conservatism and Metternich
- Unit 4: The Industrial Revolution
- Unit 5: Romanticism
- Unit 6: Unification of Italy and Germany
- Unit 7: Imperialism and Nationalism
- Unit 8: World War I
- Unit 9: Russia's Revolution to the Death of Lenin
- Unit 10: Cultural developments in the early 20th Century
- Unit 11: The World Depression
- Unit 12: The Rise of Totalitarianism: Two Case Studies - Germany & Italy
- Unit 13: The Second Global Conflict of the 20th Century
- Unit 14: The Cold War
- Unit 15: The Third World's Growing Impact

The first assumption of the experiment was - every student is an individual and must be handled as such in the class. The students were not to be fitted into the one teaching system. If each student was to be treated individually, then some assessment had to be made of each student's learning skills and his attitudes. Once this could be determined, then it would be possible to fit various learning systems to the learning skills and hopefully the student would be well on his way in achieving the objectives of the course. If the student had glaring weaknesses in some skills, efforts could be made to improve them - for example, by using the reading skills lab or tutorial efforts to augment his reading and writing skills. Unfortunately I did not have any sophisticated tests to help determine the learning skills of my students. Such tests exist and are being used but were not available to me at the time of the experiment.<sup>1</sup> As a result I observed my students for a couple of weeks and then guided them in choosing

---

1. The tests I now use are the result of the work of Dr. Joseph Hill and his associates at Oakland Community College in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. The results of the test for each student are put in the form of a cognitive map which presents an assessment of the individual student's skills in reading, listening, and skills in interpreting his learning environment. For more information, contact Dr. Hill

from among a number of individualized learning systems that were provided for them.

The individualized learning systems available utilized three of the senses; sight, sound, and touch. These systems could be used separately or in any combination by the student. System one was based upon reading only the text. System two combined sound and sight in the form of slides integrated to tape cassettes which contained mini-lectures. System three involved sight and sound in the form of movies, filmstrips, video-tapes, and 8mm continuous loops. System four was based upon sound utilizing group interaction in the form of discussions, simulations and games. System five used sight and touch through the use of artifacts, documents, and Jackdaws. System six used any combination of the above five and involved students of the class teaching other students in the class. These systems of learning were supported by a number of other materials. For example, a loose-leaf study manual for each unit was provided. This manual consisted of 1) pre and post-tests 2) a schedule of completion 3) a tri-level set of learning objectives. The first level of learning objectives was the general over-all objective for the unit. This was divided at the second level usually into five to seven more specific learning objectives. Each of these second level objectives was in turn divided at the third level into single concepts. If the student did not understand the general learning objective of the individual unit or one of the second level learning objectives, he could turn to the single concepts at the third level and by answering them one by one, achieve each of the second level objectives and finally the general objective of the unit. These levels of the study manual were also designed to encourage the students to recognize and participate in the problems of historical interpretation, and to analyze certain historical questions which required research and thought on their part. That this design was partially successful was born out by

student responses to the Question, "History does not teach you to think", where 94% disagreed with the statement.

The development of the learning systems meant a survey had to be made of the Audio-Visual materials and equipment available on the campus plus the consideration of purchasing some additional equipment and materials. To my pleasant surprise the AV department had almost all of the equipment I could use and was eager to aid in the location of the materials and equipment needed. After a careful investigation of the commercial equipment that would have to be purchased, the slide-cassette units designed by the Johnson County Community College were selected. The slides necessary for the Audio-Tutorial system, number two, were made locally with a Kodak Visual Maker by the instructor. The tape cassettes were made by the instructor and duplicated locally by the library staff. Film was rented from other universities and an effort was made to secure about two hours of film for each unit of each semester. About forty 8mm continuous loop films were purchased for the second semester.

As is obvious, this approach costs money. The money granted for the experiment amounted to \$10,000 for materials plus \$1200 for salary to develop the course. Of the \$10,000 granted for the experiment, about three-fourths of it was spent. The largest single expenditure, \$2,000 was for the slides. The second largest expenditure was for the purchase of some new equipment and the 3rd largest cost was for film rentals. There were no problems in budgeting due to the amount of the grant and the exceptionally kind help and assistance provided by the University's business office.

The grant for the experiment was awarded in the second week of July and the experiment was to be operational by September 1. The \$1200 was to pay for work done during this time span of six weeks. By working fifteen to eighteen hours a day for six weeks,



most of the first semester of the course was ready for the September 1 deadline. While the first semester was in progress the second semester's materials were created - slides were made, scripts written for the tapes, film ordered, the second semester study manual written. No extra pay was allowed for this although to complete the necessary work required about three hours a day during most of the fall semester and full time during the Christmas vacation period. It is my opinion that by working hard during a summer period, it would be possible to convert the average world civilization or western civilization course to individualized independent instruction by the beginning of the fall term.

The role of the instructor in the experiment was not to be the fount of historical wisdom and insight nor the dispenser of knowledge as usually is the role of those using the lecture techniques. The instructor's role in the experiment was to serve as the facilitator of student learning. This was to be accomplished by working with each student as an individual learner and by helping the individual student use the learning systems that would aid him to maximize learning. To the obvious function of facilitating the student's mastery of the content of the course, was another equally important function and one difficult to measure. This was to improve each student's ability and skills to learn on his own, to be able to learn in a class environment, in which the system of learning being utilized was not the most advantageous to the individual student's skills and aptitudes.

Various procedures were used to determine and assure the students' progress, e.g. personal interviews, weekly objective tests, essays, oral examinations, etc. The very fact that each student was handled as an individual provided the opportunity for rather careful and frequent examination of progress and work. When a problem arose, the instructor could aid the student rather than speak to the whole class as if it shared

the same problem. Another aspect of the effort to work with each student individually came at the mid-term when every student was contacted by phone and letter requesting an appearance before the instructor for an interview. It was made clear that the sole purpose of the interview was to discuss the student's progress in learning and to help the student in the event help was needed.

The objective tests used to determine student progress were multiple choice and matching. When the individual student was ready to be tested and assuming he wanted an objective test, it would be provided with the instruction to return the test in 24 hours with at least 90% of the questions correct. As soon as the test was returned, it was scored in the student's presence and he was told his success or lack of it in attaining the 90% mastery level. The only marks placed upon the test were either "90% Correct" or "Not 90% Correct." If the latter was the case, the test was returned to the student with the instruction to rework the test and bring it in again within another 24 hours. Since there was no indication as to which selections were correct or incorrect, theoretically the student would have to redo the entire test. The rationale for this was to reinforce the correct material learned, and to develop an analytical skill for determination of correct information and interpretation. The repeat process could be used twice after the initial testing. If 90% mastery was not attained by the third try, the instructor and student together went over the test item by item attempting to determine the problems facing the student or inherent in the test. After this the student choose another test option for evaluation over the unit, either an essay or an oral examination.

The essay tests were based upon the second level of the learning objectives. The instructor would select from three to five of the second level learning objectives

and the student would then select one or two to answer. Every student was required to write at least six essays during each semester. The essays were graded within 24 hours after they had been turned in. When the essays were less than C in quality, a check was placed at the top of the first page of the essay to indicate to the student that he was to come in for consultation and possibly tutorial help. When the student did come in, the essay was carefully analyzed with him. The items covered in the analysis included the understanding of the question, the research done to find the data to answer the question, the outline of the answer, the sentence and paragraph construction. The student was then asked to try again and again and again if necessary or until he was satisfied with the grade he had earned. There was no penalty in retaking any test since the purpose of the testing was to allow the student to express his degree of mastery of the material to the best of his advantage rather than in the terms and the modes selected for him by the instructor.

The oral examinations were based upon the same second level of learning objectives mentioned above. Usually these examinations lasted between 30-40 minutes. Only a small number of students took advantage of this approach of evaluation. A final option the students could choose was to devise something of their own individual choosing that demonstrated mastery of the unit. Only two students choose to use this option.

Since the objective tests were graded as the student waited, the oral examination results were given at the conclusion of the test, and the essays were graded within 24 hours of being turned in, it was possible to provide the students with rapid feed-back concerning performance on specific units as well as cumulative standings. This not only meant frequent positive reinforcement for most of the students, it also meant numerous opportunities for the instructor to ascertain individual student difficulties and to

prescribe possible helps as well as ascertaining problems students experienced within the course so that corrections in the course could be made quickly.

The course was open ended which meant students could complete the course at their own speed. It was possible to finish before the mid-term and it was possible for a student to spend two semesters completing what normally most students accomplish in one semester. This allowed each to learn at his own pace.

The students met as a class only twice during the semester. On the first day the instructions concerning class procedure were spelled out and some materials were distributed. The second meeting came at the end of the semester when the class filled out a series of evaluation forms and took the final examination. The only other times students would get together was at the voluntary discussion groups which met once a week or in spontaneous groups in the library in either the projection room or in the study area set aside for the class by the library staff.

Having the study area and the film projection room located in the library is an approach I have used before with considerable success. One of the advantages of using the library as the classroom is that almost all of the primary and secondary materials for history available on our campus are located in one building. Thus whenever a student asked a question he was instructed to find the answer in the library, and thereby the learning of history was combined with better mastery of library resources.<sup>2</sup>

All of the learning systems were housed in the library. There were numerous texts available to the student other than the one assigned for the course. The tape cassettes and the integrated slides were checked out from the library staff and used in machines

---

<sup>2</sup> See my article in the Fall issue 1973 of Learning Today for using the Library as the classroom for teaching world civilization.

located in the study area. The filmstrips, movies and film loops were shown in a projection room easily accessible to the students. The artifacts such as Napoleon's death mask, some replicas of art works were kept in the study area for student examination. All of these systems were available to the student upon demand whenever the library was open. Our library is open during week days from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm; this allowed optimum usage of the various systems to the students. It needs to be added that everytime a student used any of the materials, it was logged in a book so we could later correlate the usage of the various systems with student attitudes and achievement in learning.

The opportunity for group interaction occurred during the voluntary discussion groups mentioned previously, through the spontaneous discussions that arose in the study area and by the use of games. Students seemed to get more out of the games after they had finished their study on a unit than prior to finishing a unit. Some of the games played included: "The Origins of World War I;" "The Fall of France 1940;" "The Battle of Britain;" Chess; "The Blitzkrieg." These games were used to provide realistic simulation of historical events and to allow the student to attempt to understand some of the complexities and variables facing people in given historical situations. Not all of the students participated in group interaction but when the effort being made is to try to fit the needs and skills of each student, it is not necessary to require all of them to participate.

Two assistants helped in working with the class. The one was a graduate assistant who had taught in high schools for about five years. She related easily and effectively to the students and made excellent suggestions during the course of the semester that

helped to improve the course. The second assistant was a junior history major who came in nights to supervise the use of the equipment and to help students having trouble with writing. One of the tasks of independent individualized instruction we attempted to accomplish was to help those who were lacking the skill of written expression. The two assistants took on this responsibility and were able to significantly help some of the students improve in this skill.

The use of interviews was built into the course. I wanted the students to learn something about oral history - its strengths and weaknesses - as well as getting to know someone of the older generation somewhat better. As a result, some went to the nursing home to interview people about WW I and some interviewed their grandparents about the Depression and WW II while others sought out their parents to learn about the Korean Conflict. For those whose parents were not in the community, they were asked to seek some one of similar age and to ask them the same questions they would ask their parents. This technique turned out to be very valuable for most of the students. Some learned things about their parents and grandparents that they never knew. Most of them gained a deeper insight into the struggles of the 20th Century.

Each day brought a different experience as the class progressed. For example, during the unit on WW II, I observed a student in tears while using the cassette-integrated tape system. Although I could not hear the tape, by observing the picture on the screen I knew she had gotten to the section that was discussing Hitler's Ultimate Solution in the destruction of the Jews. Another time a student came in and began talking with me about the depression and was very deeply moved by his interview with his grandfather about how hard times had been. This gave him a new insight into his own father's attitudes toward the world. Quite frequently students from other

classes would be attracted to the study area either because of the noise, laughter or loud discussion connected with the games or some other event or they would wander in and wonder about the machines. Before they would leave, many of them either got involved in the discussions or ended up with a set of earphones on listening and watching an unit. We were particularly proud of a Vietnam veteran who came to the class and learned to write essays. His first essay was six disconnected sentences; by the end of the semester with tutorial help from all of us, he was completing five page essays that were B in quality.

Twice during the semester formal student evaluations were given so feed-back could be taken into account in changing parts of the approach. Throughout the term we encouraged the students to tell us which units were good or bad and why they thought so. The first formal student evaluations came at the mid-term. We scheduled interviews with all of the students, allotting 15 minutes per interview. The students were contacted by phone and by letter so they knew when and where they were to keep their appointment. Close to 90% of the students came and gave us direct feed-back about the course. Many of their suggestions were incorporated for the second half of the semester. It was their suggestion to make the discussion groups voluntary. The second student evaluation came at the end of the semester. By this time it was obvious that not all who had started the class were going to finish it. About a third were withdrawn and about half of these were administrative withdrawals consisting of students who had signed up for the course and then never came or who dropped out of school or changed their schedule. This meant that we had a potential of about two-thirds of the class for the final evaluation and 82% of them came to give us their evaluations.

Four attitudenal surveys were taken at the end of the semester; all were completed minus student identification. The first survey was a class preference list; the second

a scale on the method of the course; a third was a scale on the subject of the course; and the fourth, a questionnaire quite similar to the oral interview secured during the mid-term period.

The preference scale simply asked the students to rank in order the courses they were then taking. Eight blanks were provided. After tabulation it was learned the students were enrolled in about 80 different courses. 46% of the students indicated that World Civilization was their first preference; 21% indicated it to be their second preference and 12% indicated it to be their third preference. Thus 67% of the class ranked World Civilization either first or second. A course in world literature had the same percentage for third preference. The only other class that had higher than 12% preference selections was Economics and 15% of the students ranked it last.

A further analysis was made on the basis of class standing and order of preference. Here it was learned that half of the freshmen ranked world civ first; 55% of the sophomores ranked it first; half of the juniors ranked it first; and 40% of the seniors ranked it first. When the second preferences are added to the first the results were as follows: 50% of the freshmen ranked it first and second; 75% of the sophomores ranked it first and second; 75% of the juniors ranked it first and second; and 60% of the seniors ranked it first and second.

What were the majors of the students in the class? The largest number of majors was in Business, 23%; 13% were in health and PE; 13% in Education; 10% in vocational fields; 10% in the behavioral sciences; 6% were pre-med; 6% were history majors; and 6% were in nursing, speech, fine arts, with 10% undecided.

During the mid-term interviews we learned that many of the students had delayed in taking the course because they said they disliked history. Ten percent indicated



they were taking the course a second time since they had flunked it earlier. Whether or not this could be considered a typical class is difficult to determine. I think it is safe to say that the motivational level of most of the students was originally relatively low. They were taking the course because it was required. One might say they considered it necessary but bitter medicine. In light of this, the results are encouraging.

The second and third surveys on method and content, used five choices: Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The statistical technique of equal-appearing intervals was used to determine the median and the Q value or the spread of the distribution of the middle 50% of the judgments of the students. When a low median and a low Q factor occur, the results are not only positive but a high percentage of the student replies are bunched around the positive response. Positive and negative percentages were arrived at by adding together the number of responses made to Strongly Agree and Agree, and Strongly Disagree with Disagree. The Undecided responses were considered to be neutral. The mean for each question was compared with the results achieved from the use of the same surveys with the Audio-Tutorial approach at Southwest Missouri State University.<sup>3</sup>

The following are the results to the History Attitude Scale - Method. This Attitude Scale and the one on Subject are modified scales of those originated by Joseph L. French of Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Virgil McCall and Dr. William Hammond

---

<sup>3</sup> Dr. William Hammond of the History Department of Southwest Missouri State University adapted the Audio-Tutorial approach of S.N. Postlethwaite to World History. The summary of this adaptation is found in Hammond's Final Report: The Development of an Audio-Tutorial Curriculum for Freshman World History, sponsored by the Office of Education, Bureau of Research of HEW, Project No. O-F-009, Grant No. OEG-6-70-0012(509). The comparative figures cited in this paper are taken from the above Final Report.

of Southwest Missouri State University (SMSU) made the modifications. In response to the item "I like the way History was taught this semester", the mean was 1.49; the SMSU mean was 1.61. 90% of the responses were positive with only 7% negative. The Q factor was 1.63. Not only does this show a very high degree of positive response, but it shows a high level of student agreement. The individualized instruction approach can be seen as very successful in the teaching of history.

In response to the item "I would have liked to ask more questions during this semester", the mean was 2.97 (SMSU mean 2.85). There were 47% positive responses, 18% neutral and 25% negative. Approximately one-third of the class felt that they still had questions that they would like answered. I would venture the guess that in a lecture class, the percent that would still like to ask questions by the end of the semester could be considerably higher.

In response to the item "I knew how I was doing in History all semester", the mean was 2.10 (SMSU mean 2.17). There were 70% positive answers, 15% neutral and 15% negative. Thus over two-thirds of the class felt they knew their academic achievement throughout the semester. This is probably the result of the topical approach combined with the weekly demonstration of the attainment of the educational objective.

In response to the item "The grading has been fair this semester", the mean was 1.62 (SMSU mean 1.76). There were 88% positive answers, 6% neutral and 6% negative. The low Q factor of 1.20 plus the very high percent of positive responses indicates a high percent of agreement on this item. This is probably partly due to the unlimited retesting that was allowed.

In response to the item "There was a lot of class time wasted this semester", the mean was 1.96 (SMSU mean 2.19). Only 5% thought a lot of class time was wasted, 24% were neutral and 71% did not feel a lot of class time was wasted.

In response to the item "I wasn't able to keep up with the other students this semester", the mean was 2.23 (SMSU mean 2.04). Only 16% thought this item was true; 14% were neutral and almost 70% considered the item to be false. In other words they thought they could and did keep up. This attitude is probably due to the fact that they could work at their own speed in their own way to accomplish the objectives set before them.

In response to item eight "It took too long to get my test papers back in this class". the mean was 2.10 (SMSU mean 2.16). None of the students agreed with this statement and only 19% were neutral. 81% disagreed with the statement. There is a high concentration in agreement on this item. It should be pointed out that most tests were graded not more than 1 day after they were turned in.

In response to the item "We covered the subject too fast this semester", the mean was 2.23 (SMSU mean 2.39). 22% felt the subject was covered too fast; 17% were neutral and 61% felt the statement was not accurate. It is interesting to note that close to 14% of the class took more than one semester to complete their work.

In response to item 10, "I believe that too much written work was required this semester", the mean was 2.45 (SMSU mean 1.99). About one-fourth of the class responded that too much was required while 10% were neutral and 69% responded that they did not agree with the item. Realize the students wrote at least twelve essays during the two semesters and almost 70% did not believe this to be too much written work.

In response to the item "I had plenty of opportunity to work on my own this semester", an item that tests one of the basic assumptions of the class, the mean was an incredible 1.58 (SMSU mean 1.64). Only 4% were neutral in their responses and 4% were negative. 92% of the students expressed an extremely high concentration of agreement that they had plenty of opportunity to work individually independently during the semester.

"I worked more in History than in my other classes this semester." This item

interested me greatly. The mean was 2.78 (SMSU mean 3.17). Less than half of the students responded they did work harder, 40% , 24% were neutral, and 36% indicated they did not work harder than in their other classes. In the fourth survey the same question was asked a second time, and 61% indicated they worked harder in the world civ class than in their other classes while 15% indicated they did not, with 24% neutral. I don't know what to make of this discrepancy, but I do know that another question in the fourth survey revealed some interesting facts about student study life. When the question was asked, How much time do you spend on the class per week?, the results were as follows: 14% said they spent from 0-3 hours per week; 52% spent from 4-6 hours per week; 17% spent 7-9 hours per week; 16% spent over 10 hours per week. If over half spend from 4-6 hours per week on world civ and this is more than they usually spend on a class, it is no wonder we frequently despair at how much they fail to learn and retain.

In response to the item "I think more use of teaching aids (charts, illustrations, etc.) should have been used" the mean was 2.55 (SMSU mean 2.73). Only 20% thought more use should be made of teaching aids and 24% were neutral. 51% of the responses disagreed with the statement. I suspect the reason my students disagreed more strongly with this item than those at SMSU is simply because we had more materials available at the demand of the student. The students had the opportunity to see 40 movies and 20 filmstrips plus all kinds of document facsimilies and artifacts.

In response to the item "There was too much emphasis on things that weren't important this semester", the mean was 2.23 (SMSU mean 2.27). Only 13% of the students agreed with this statement while 26% gave neutral responses. 61% of the students disagreed with the statement and the Q factor indicates again a very high concentration of

agreement among the students. These responses are probably due to the "post-hole" or topical approach used throughout the semester, and is a hopeful response in that perhaps history was beginning to be meaningful for them.

In response to the item "Too much outside work was required in History this semester", the mean was 2.43 (SMSU mean 2.31). About one-fifth of the class (18%) agreed with the statement while 7% remained neutral. Almost two-thirds (65%) disagreed with the statement. Any outside work done was the result of the student's individual interest being stimulated. No outside work was required.

In response to the last item of the Method survey, "It was too easy for the slacker to get by this semester", the mean was 2.26 (SMSU mean 2.65). Only 11% thought this statement to be accurate while 27% remained neutral. Sixty-two percent disagreed but a relatively high Q factor of 1.81 shows a broader dispersion of their agreement than in the previous two items.

In summary, the results of the evaluation of the method used demonstrated no negative evaluation. The majority of the students who stayed in the class, overwhelmingly responded favorably to self instructional techniques.

Now let us turn to the History Attitude Scale - Subject. Recall the same possibility of choices were used in this scale as in the preceding and the same number of responses were collected. The results were as follows.

I had hoped for a higher positive response on the first item, but such was not the case. In response to the item, "This course in History should be required of all students for graduation" the mean was 2.82 (SMSU mean 2.88). Of the responses, 24% were neutral, 29% were negative and 47% positive. The relatively high Q factor with less than 50% agreeing with the statement shows a wider dispersion of agreement than

perhaps historians would like to see.

In response to the item "I received experience in this History class that will be valuable all my life", the mean was 2.24 (SMSU mean 2.76). The same percent of responses were negative as neutral, 16%. Two-thirds of the students gave a positive response. With the median at 1.97 and the Q factor at 1.88 there was a fairly wide dispersion of agreement with a majority of the students seemingly convinced of the experiential value of the class..

"This History course is only for those who need a background for teaching or who are history majors." In response to this, the mean was 2.68 (SMSU mean 2.31). Thirteen percent of the students were neutral on this statement, 22% agreed with it, while 65% of the students disagreed with the statement. It would appear that my students felt the history course had sufficient relevancy to be meaningful for non-history majors.

In response to the item "This History course gave me my first real enthusiasm for History", the mean was 2.97 (SMSU mean 2.61). Twelve percent of the students again were neutral with 48% disagreeing with the statement. 39% of the students responded positively. This conflicted with the data collected earlier during the oral mid-term interviews.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps their response indicates something positive that we have been missing in our approach in teaching history - about half of our students are pre-disposed to be somewhat enthusiastic toward history and we should build upon this.

"History does not teach you to think." The responses given to this statement are very encouraging. The mean was 1.77 (SMSU mean 1.67). Only 4% of the students

---

<sup>4</sup> Fifty-two percent said at the mid-term they were positively disposed toward history before taking the course. Forty-two percent gave a negative response. By the end of the semester about two-thirds of the 42% had changed their attitude to positive from negative.

agreed with the item while 82% disagreed with the statement. The low median of 1.77 and Q factor of 1.07 indicates a high concentration of agreement in student responses. Apparently over 80% of the students felt the course in world civilization encouraged them to think.

In response to item 6 of the Subject survey, "This History course should be eliminated as an offering at this college", the mean was 1.75 (SMSU mean 1.54). Eleven percent of the students agreed with the item and 9% made neutral responses. The remaining 80% disagreed with the statement. The median of 1.37 and the Q factor of 1.32 indicates the students strongly disagreed. This seems to indicate that the course was meaningful to them.

In response to the item "Most projects in this History course were of little value", the mean was 1.77 (SMSU mean 1.83). Four percent of the responses agreed with the item and 9% were neutral with 87% disagreeing with the statement. The low median of 1.13 and Q factor of 1.27 indicates the students were in strong disagreement with the item and that for most of them the projects must have been of some value. When a similar question was posed in a negative mood in the Method survey, 88% of the responses indicated too much time was not spent upon unimportant things. In both surveys there was considerable agreement that student time was not spent upon unimportant or trivial material.

"This History class is the best class at this college in which creative thinking can be taught." One-third of the class gave a positive response to this item with close to one-fourth in the neutral range. Forty-two percent disagreed with the statement. The mean was 3.18 (SMSU mean 2.78). About all one can conclude is that more disagreed with this item than agreed although it is rather fascinating to realize that one-third of the students did feel positive about this item.

In response to the item "Only the brighter students benefit from this class in History", the mean was 1.99 (SMSU mean 1.85). Only 9% of the students responded in agreement with the item while only 18% gave neutral responses. The remaining 73% disagreed with the statement and strongly. The strength of their disagreement is seen in the median of 1.68 and low Q factor of 1.18. When this response is compared with item 16 of the Method Survey, "It was easy for the slacker to get by this semester" where only 9% agreed, the conclusion can be drawn that the course seemed to fit the needs, skills, and level of most of the students, whether bright, average or slow. This is further confirmed by the results shown in the increase of scores the class attained in a post-test over the pre-test. Almost all of the students more than doubled their pre-test scores on the post-test. The odds for this to occur by chance are one in a thousand. This seems to strongly support the students feeling that all students would benefit from the experimental approach.

In response to the item "The subject matter of this History class is too mechanical and formalized", 18% of the students agreed and 9% were neutral. Over three-fourths (80%) of the students disagreed with the statement. The mean was 2.12 (SMSU mean 2.01). Almost 40% of the students strongly disagreed with the item. With a class that was almost totally open and unstructured, one wonders why 18% would give agreeing responses.

"This history class has improved my ability to think logically in any type of situation." The mean response was 2.61 (SMSU mean 2.63). Almost half (46%) of the class agreed with this statement while only 12% disagreed and no one marked the choice Strongly Disagree. When the same item was responded to at SMSU among the traditionally taught World Civilization classes, the students tended to disagree with the item. It is interesting to note that the AT approach used at SMSU and the approach I used gave results that were much more positive than negative.

The next item was a question put in a negative mood, asked during the oral inter-



views at the mid-term in the positive mood: "Would you recommend this course in History to others?" The responses then and at the end of the semester were basically the same. Those who would not recommend the class told us the reason for their unwillingness to do so was the fact they thought the lecture course was much easier. "All one has to do is to sit quietly and take the tests." When we asked them in which class they learned the most, the lecture class or the experimental world civ class, they admitted that in the latter class they learned the most. The mean response to this item in the survey was an extremely low, 1.49 (SMSU mean 1.59). Eight percent indicated they would not recommend the course and 4% were neutral. The remaining 88% were willing to recommend the class. In fact 63% responded Strongly Disagree.

In response to the item "This class in History has helped me to develop an appreciation of the importance of the past to the present", the mean was 1.83 (SMSU mean 2.01). Only 9% of the students indicated they disagreed. No student marked Strongly Disagree. Over 85% of the responses were positive. The median of 1.78 and Q factor of .92 show a high concentration of agreement among the students that they had gained appreciation of the past and its importance for the present.

"This History class has helped me appreciate the importance of History in daily living." The mean response was 2.47. The median of 2.05 and the Q factor of .86 indicated an extremely high number of students responded in a similar manner and in this instance, in a positive manner. When the same item was posed at SMSU the response was between Agree and Undecided, the mean was 2.44. Over three-fourths (76%) of the students at NMSU agreed with the statement and only 9% of the students disagreed. No student marked Strongly Disagree.

In response to the last item "This course was excellent for the slower students who needed more repetition and prodding than most", the mean was 2.35 (SMSU mean 2.00). About half of the students (52%) agreed with this statement, 30% of the students disagreed and 21% were neutral.

What can we conclude from the Subject Survey? The Q factors make it quite clear that in 80% of the responses the interval of agreement was under two, indicating a high concentration of agreement. In the remaining 20% of the responses the Q factor was under the interval of 2.5 which is still a basically strong concentration of agreement. This means that most of the class was in agreement in their responses to the various items presented to them. The students were certainly favorably disposed to History as a subject. Not only did they find it stimulating in that it caused them to think but they were of the opinion that the course helped them to understand their present in a more meaningful manner. Would it be too much to say that they found the class to be relevant? The fact that 88% of the students would recommend the class to their peers is a particularly strong indication as to the success of the experiment.

The fourth survey used to measure student attitudes toward the course was similar to the oral interview made at the mid-term. One of the questions asked at mid-term that interested me was, "Do you use the Study Manual?". The manual consisted of the three-tiered behavioral objectives that had been constructed with the purpose of aiding the students. Most of the time consumed in developing the course had been spent in devising the behavioral objectives. Encouragingly 80% of the students indicated they did use the manual and 12% indicated they did not. However, none of the 80% used 100% of the manual as it had been constructed. The manual was utilized, but the usual qualification was the second level of objectives was used as an outline and the third level of single concepts was ignored. It is rather difficult to assess what this means - it could mean faulty construction of the behavioral objectives or

it could mean that most of the students do not need single concept learning and are thus capable to handle a higher level of abstraction than was assumed, or it could mean they felt the single concept level was busy work and thus avoided it as most students do when they can.

When the students were asked to respond to the item "Were the objectives reasonable?", over three-fourths (77%) responded in the affirmative, while 6% responded in the negative and the remaining 17% were neutral. When the responses to the item, "Were the objectives attainable" were tallied, 75% said yes while only 2% responded no, with 23% neutral. Since much of their earned grade was dependent upon their understanding of the second level of objectives which served as essay questions, it is most important to look at their responses to the query, "Are you satisfied with the evaluation of your work?" Only 15% of the students gave a negative answer to this question while almost 79% of the students indicated they were satisfied with their evaluation. Thus it is safe to conclude that the study manual did receive a positive response from the students.

In conjunction with the above question, the following was asked: "Which type of testing did you prefer, Essay or Objective?" We had assumed that most of the students would choose the objective tests but to our surprise 52% chose the essay exam while 48% choose the objective exam. During the interviews, we learned that our method of using the objective examination was considered to be very difficult by the students. Perhaps this technique plus the unlimited chances for retaking the tests helped to boost the preference for the essay examination. I might add here that 94% of the students indicated they thought it was a good idea to be able to retake an examination in an effort to raise the grade earned.

Another surprising response came after tallying the frequencies to the item, "Which of the learning techniques helped you the most?" This item could receive multiple responses. My assumption was that most students would have selected some form of Audio-Visual technique. The order of rank placed the textbook first although most of the class thought the text to be very dull; the second order went to the tape-cassettes with integrated slides; third went to the voluntary discussions. Almost 50% (79%) of the students indicated they found the discussion groups to be helpful, 15% found them not helpful. Movies were fourth and the filmstrips with synchronized sound were last. When we examined the learning systems log in relation to the students ranking, we found the text first, then the cassettes with integrated slides, and tied for third for usage were the movies and artifacts. It is quite interesting to note that at least this group of students chose the system of learning, the text, and the form of evaluation, the essay, which many of us have assumed most students were unhappy with.

One of the guidelines of the experiment was confirmed by this fourth survey. In response to two questions that dealt with the class's meeting area - the library - the students gave very strong support to this approach. Seventy-five percent of the students gave a positive reply to the item "Did it help to have the class meet in the library?" Only 11% felt that meeting in the library was not helpful. Perhaps one of the factors influencing this high positive response is found in the replies to the item "Did you use more of the libraries' resources since the class met in the library?" Here 74% of the students gave a positive response while 21% gave a negative response and 5% were neutral. The excellent cooperation of the library staff certainly was a positive factor in the students' responses. Many of the students volunteered

the data to us that they had learned more about how to use the library during this course than they had learned in a special library usage course required of all students.

There are three final items that need to be presented from the fourth survey. The first item asked "Have you learned more in this class than in your other classes?" 58% answered yes, 33% answered the same as the other classes, and 9% answered less. When the item was asked, "Did you find this class more or less difficult than your other classes?", 36% replied more difficult, 39% less difficult and 25% equal. Finally in response to the item, "If you had the choice between this type of class and a lecture class, which would you choose?", the lecture class choice received 16% while the modified AT class received 80% of the choices.

When the question was asked during the interviews at mid-term and then on the final evaluation, "What would you do to improve the course?", no single response was given with a frequency higher than two. The total number of responses that had two frequencies was four. Two thought the behavioral objectives were too difficult; two wanted more movies; two wanted the discussion groups emphasized more while one wanted them abandoned completely; and two thought the objective tests should be made easier.

There were four strengths mentioned by the students during the interviews and again at the end of the course. The first strength was the opportunity for each student to work at his own pace throughout the semester. The second strength was the fact that they were learning. One of the students wrote this: "When you learn the material on your own, you tend to retain it longer." The third strength was the variety of materials made available to them during the learning process. The last strength given was the fact that the students could talk with either the professor or the

assistants on an individual basis and gain the help or advice or encouragement needed - something usually difficult to do in mass classes.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let me review the 5 course guidelines given earlier. The first assumption was to treat each student as an individual. This was successfully accomplished through the use of the modified AT approach which included an effort to identify the learning skills of each student so each could proceed at his own pace more effectively. The student evaluations indicated they appreciated this approach and preferred it to the lecture approach. The fact that 88% would recommend the class to their peers indicates in part their enthusiasm for being treated as individuals rather than as a group.

The second guideline involved emphasis upon student learning rather than teaching. Certainly the exclusion of the lecture and lecture hall from the learning experience and the use of various learning systems placed most of the burden of learning upon the students. One of the unfortunate aspects of the experiment was the failure to compare the knowledge learned by the students in the experimental class with that learned by those in the classes where the normal lecture method is used. If the experience of SMSU would hold true on our campus, the students in the experimental class would have learned more than those in the lecture classes. Although no scores can be given to show this to be the case, at least the fact that the students felt they learned more is significant, and points in the direction that they in fact could have learned more than those in the lecture sections. In the questionnaire, the students stated generally they studied more for the experimental class than for

their other courses and during the mid-term interviews, they stated they were learning more than in their other classes, and their learning experience was not distasteful. Their essays did demonstrate considerably more insight than those in the lecture courses. This is based upon the judgement of another professor in the lecture sections. The fact the evaluations revealed the students felt they learned more than historical data -- they learned to think, they began to see the importance of the past for their own present -- is a positive result and helps to support the feeling that student self-learning was fairly well achieved.

The third guideline involved the removal of the pressures for grades. The announcement that the lowest possible grade was a C and the opportunity for unlimited retesting seemed to have a salutary affect upon the students. The student evaluations were very positive concerning the retesting policy. Yet it is interesting to note that even with the grade pressure substantially reduced, about 15% of the students withdrew from the course. It is my opinion that the basic advantage in this guideline is to help the slower and average student attain a higher level of achievement than usually is the case in the limited testing conducted in the usual lecture survey class. The grade distribution tends to confirm this. Eleven percent earned A; thirty-six percent earned B; ten percent earned C; none earned D or F; fourteen percent are still in progress and fifteen percent withdrew. The implementation of this guideline also relieved the pressure from the instructor when the grades had to be assigned to the students.

The fourth guideline was to use some form of self-instruction to accomplish the first three guidelines. The study manual and various learning systems made available to the students, allowed the instructor and the assistants to function

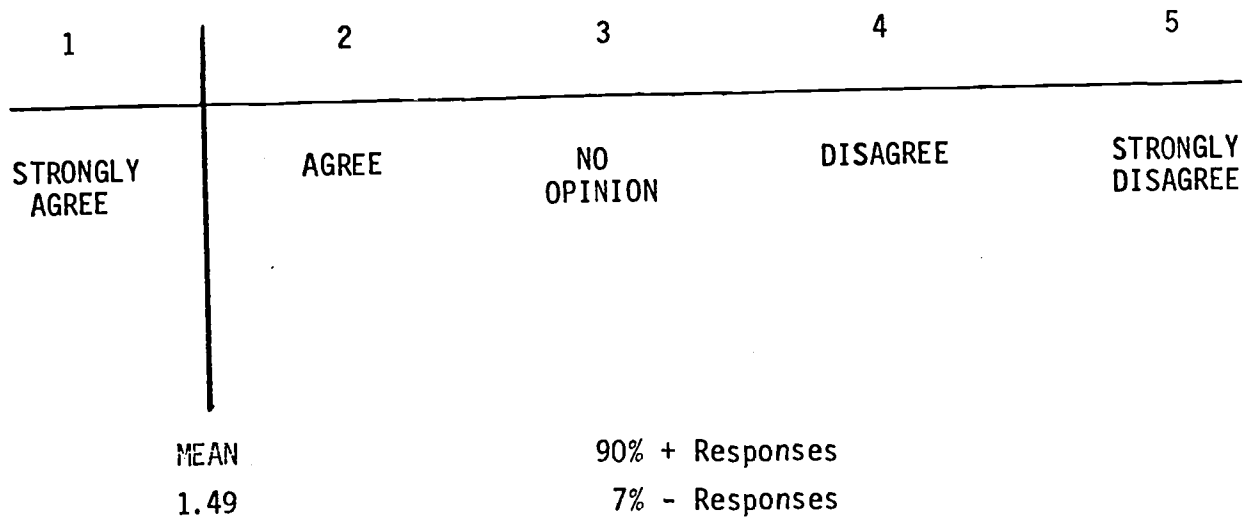
not as dispensors of knowledge but as facilitators of learning. The individual differences of each student were recognized and provided for through the use of self-instruction. Yet there was a continuity of learning for all the students through the use of the behavioral objectives. Out of this, some of the students began to develop an attitude that exceeded memorization of facts and dates. They became critical and questioning; they began to analyze and evaluate historical events and movements. This attitude ought to lead to better understanding and perhaps higher retention of material. Since the self-instruction was in a semi-programmed form, it was not difficult to use student evaluations and revise the material while it was being used. The independent self-instruction not only allowed the student to work at his own pace, it provided an almost unlimited amount of time to review the material and retake the tests until at least C mastery was attained. This approach allowed the instructor to build upon the basic knowledge gained and gave the student immediate feedback at his level of comprehension.

The last guideline involved the use of the library as the classroom and the student response plus the library staff's response indicated this to be a sound workable environment for learning. More research and testing with a control group needs to be done before the preceding results can be considered to be totally valid. At least the experiment shows that perhaps independent self-instruction in a history survey course is not only possible but might be a step in the right direction for history learning and in making history relevant to students.

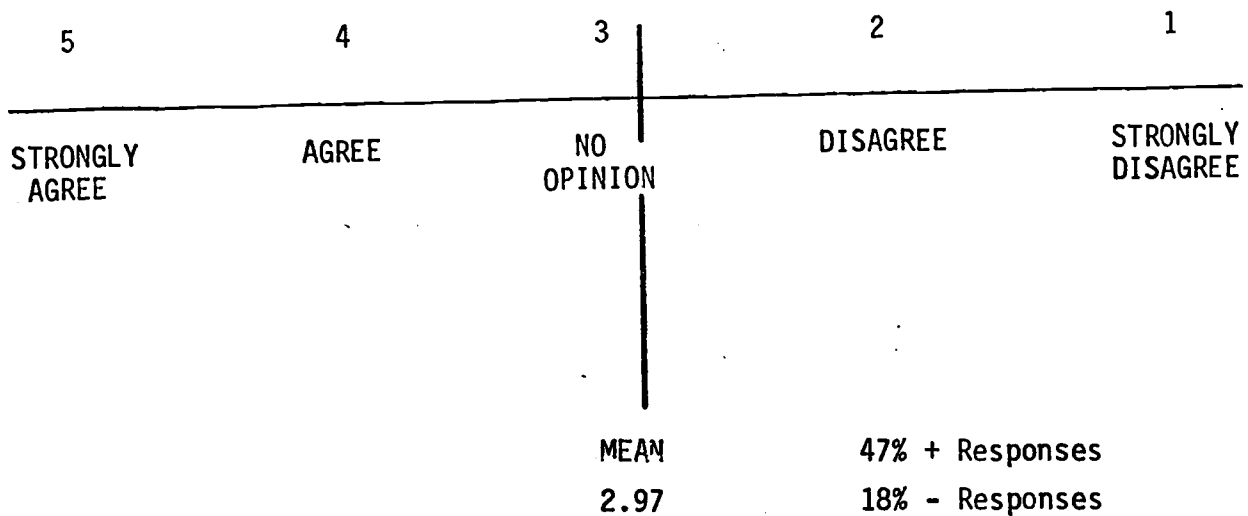


# METHOD

QUESTION 1: I like the way History was taught this semester

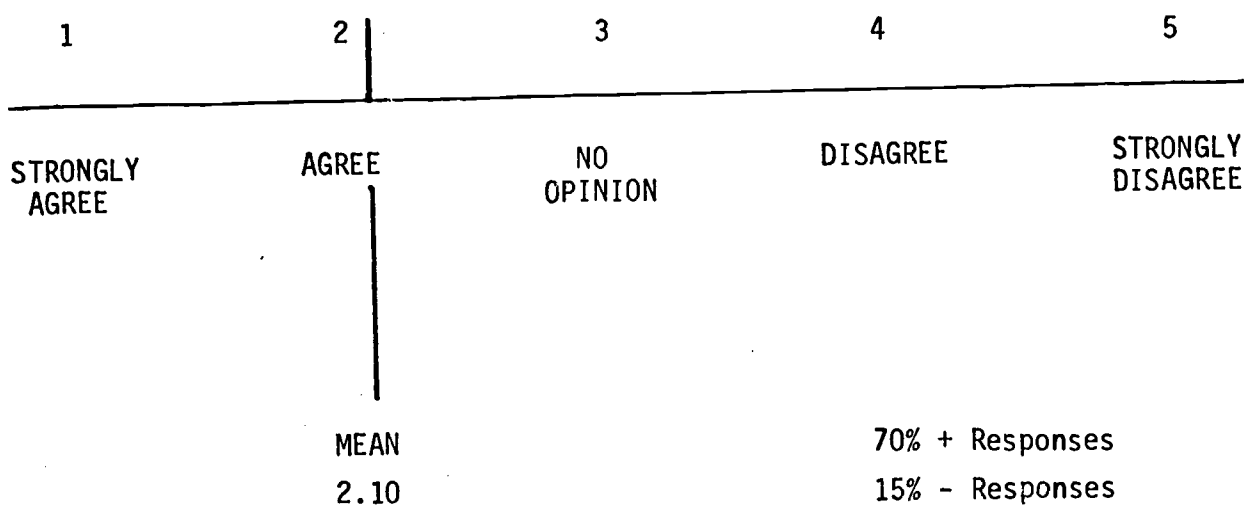


QUESTION 2: I would have liked to ask more questions during this semester

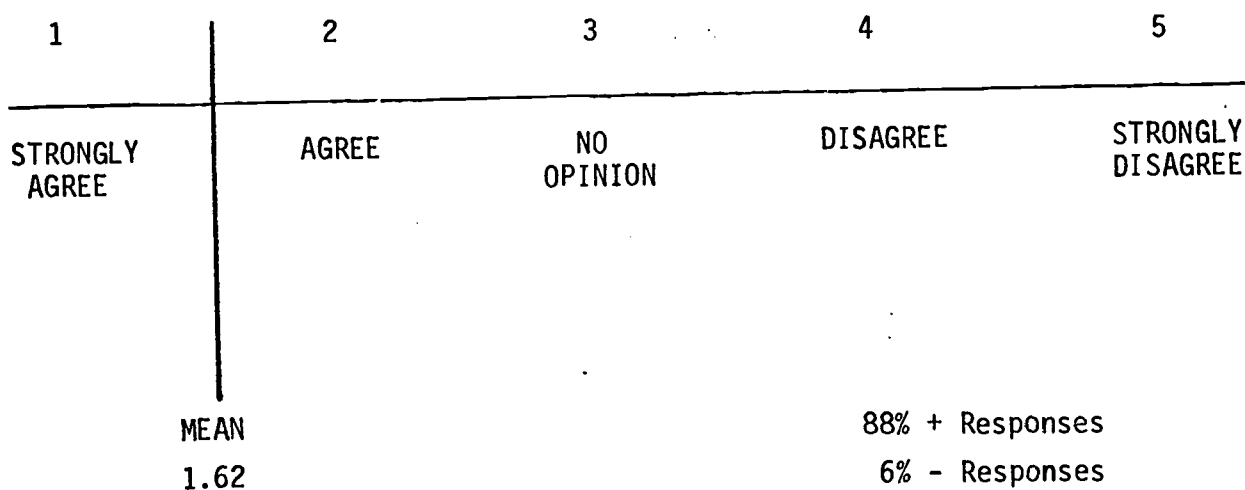


Method -2-

QUESTION 3: I knew how I was doing in History all semester

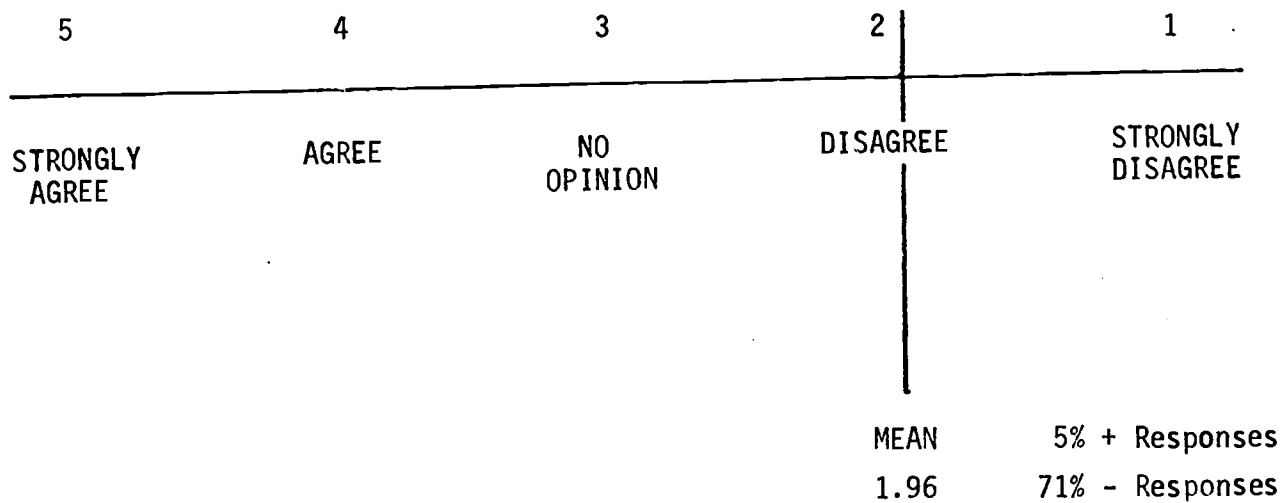


QUESTION 4: The grading has been fair this semester

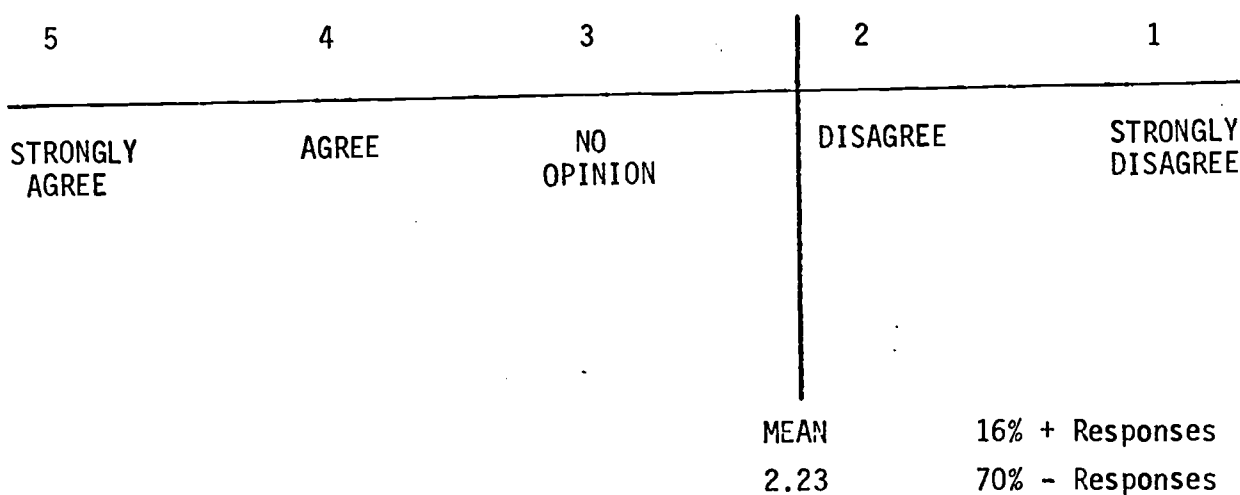


Method -3-

QUESTION 6: There was a lot of class time wasted this semester

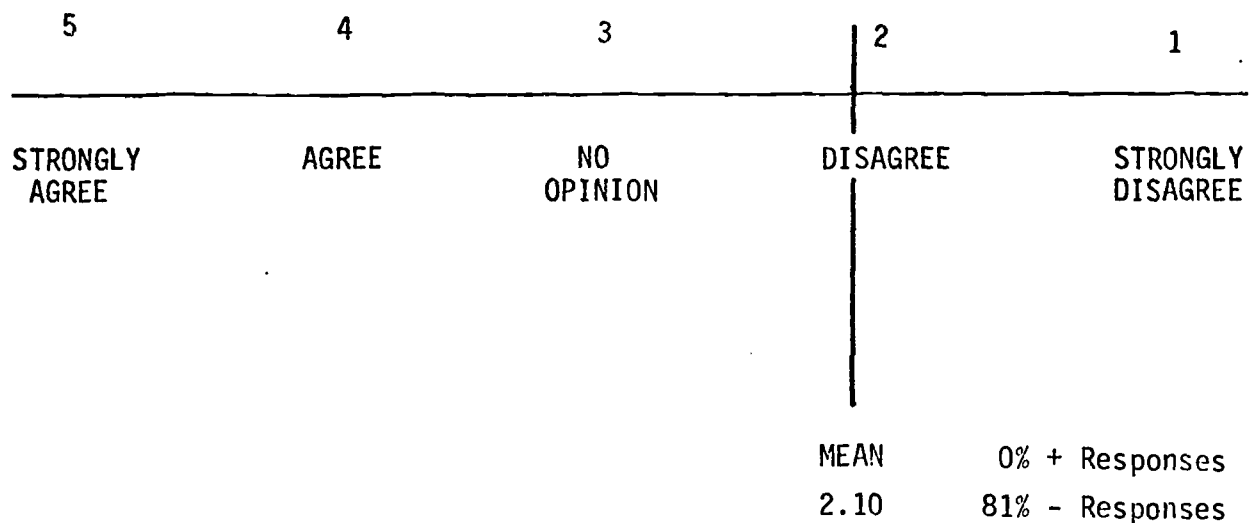


QUESTION 7: I wasn't able to keep up with the other students this semester

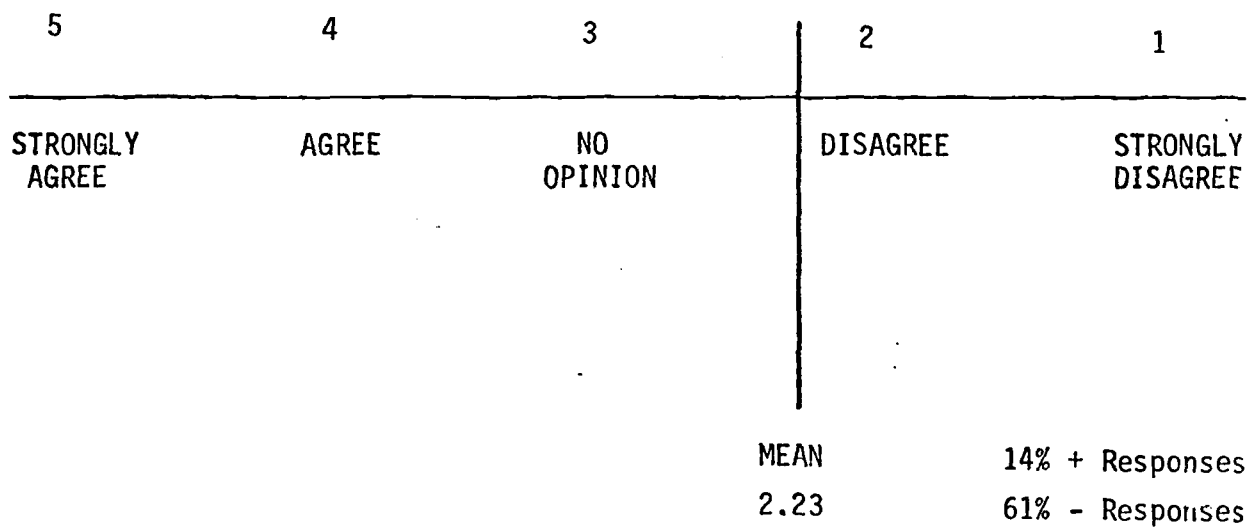


Method -4-

QUESTION 8: It took too long to get my test papers back in this class

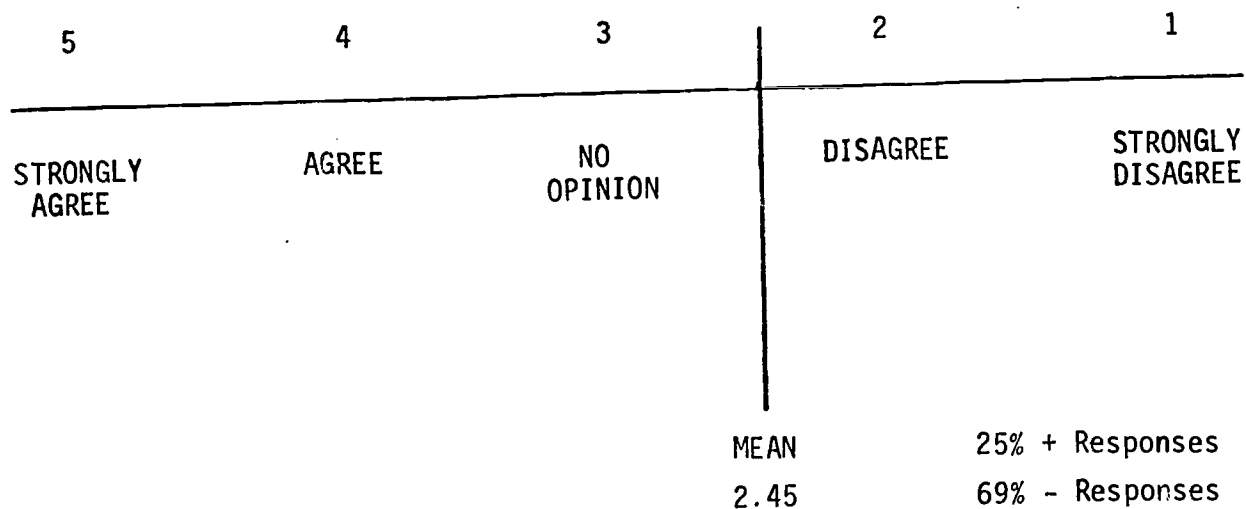


QUESTION 9: We covered the subject too fast this semester

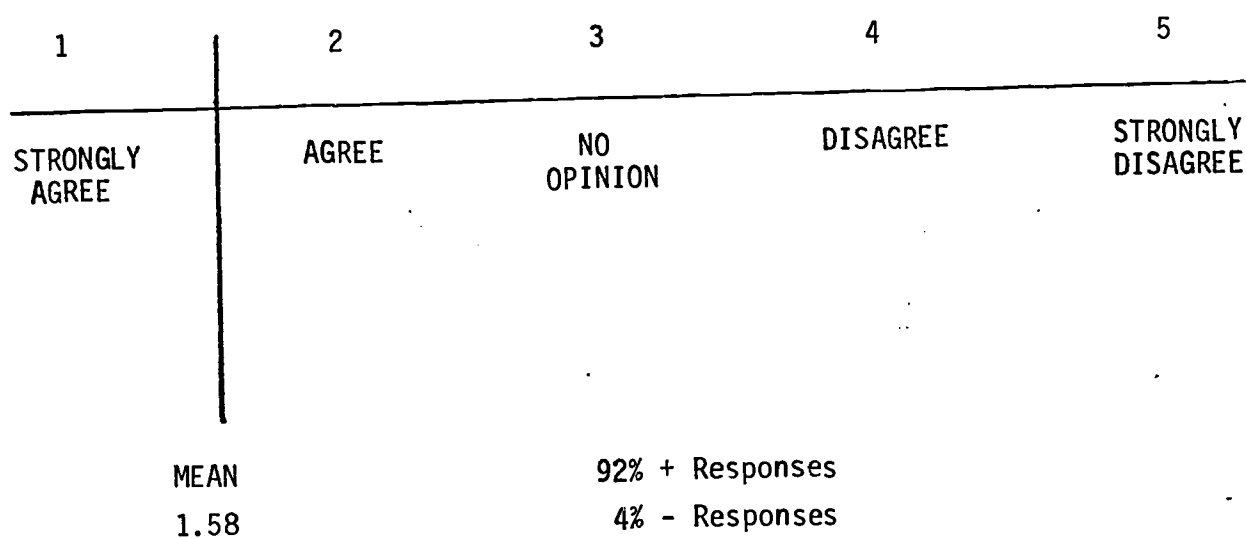


Method -5-

QUESTION 10: I believe that too much written work was required this semester

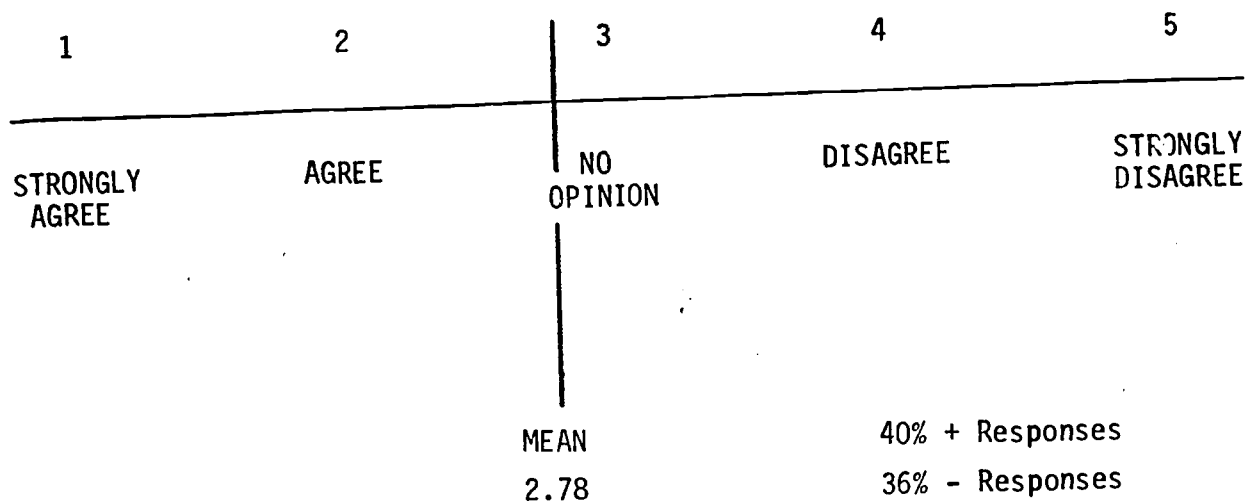


QUESTION 11: I had plenty of opportunities to work on my own this semester

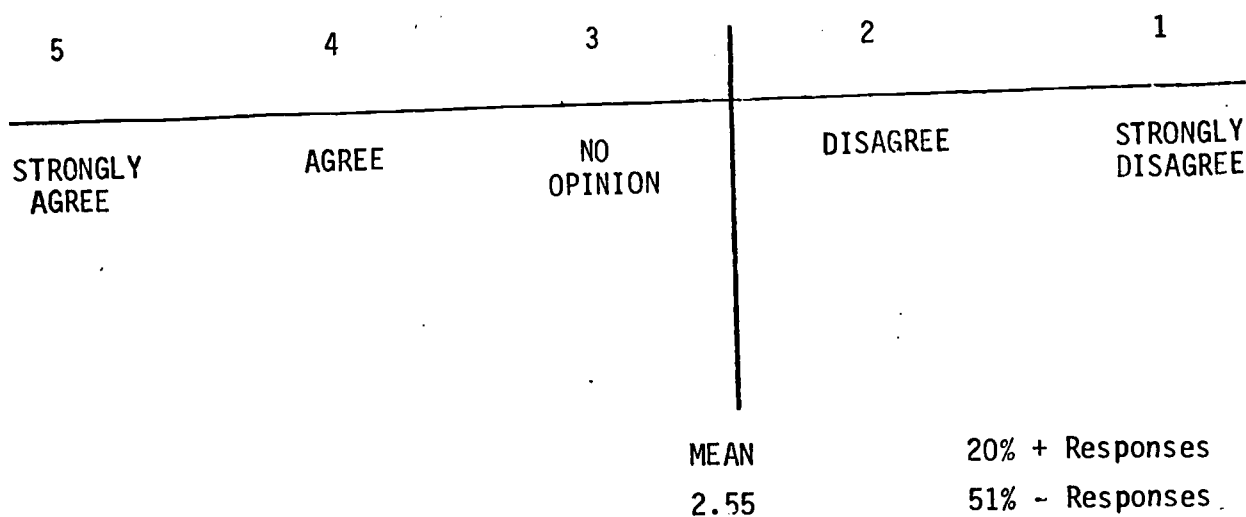


Method -6-

QUESTION 12: I worked more in History than in my other classes this semester

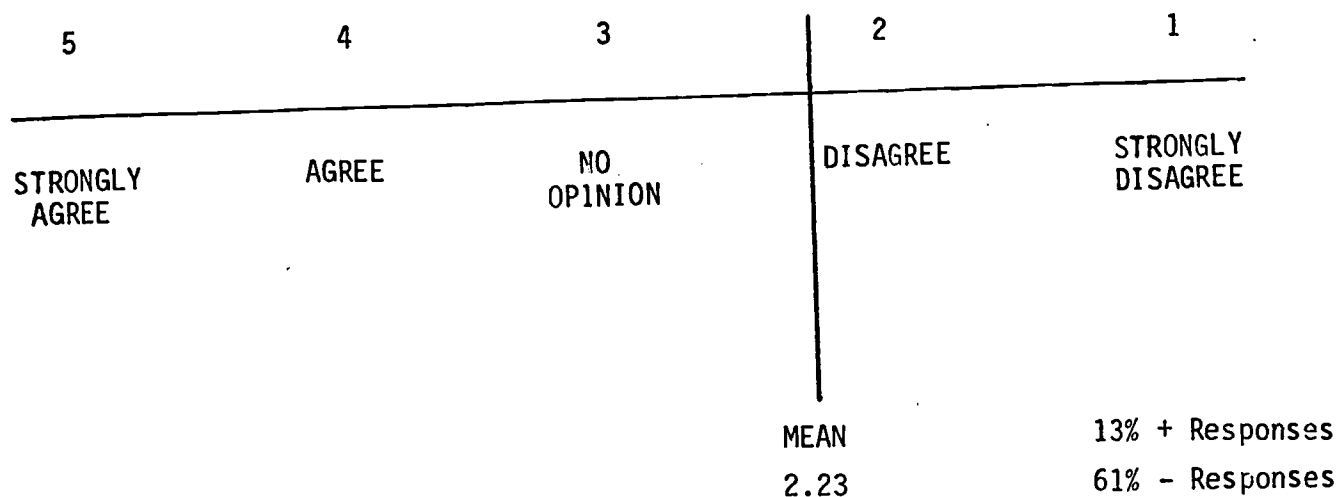


QUESTION 13: I think more use of teaching aids (charts, illustrations, etc.) should have been used

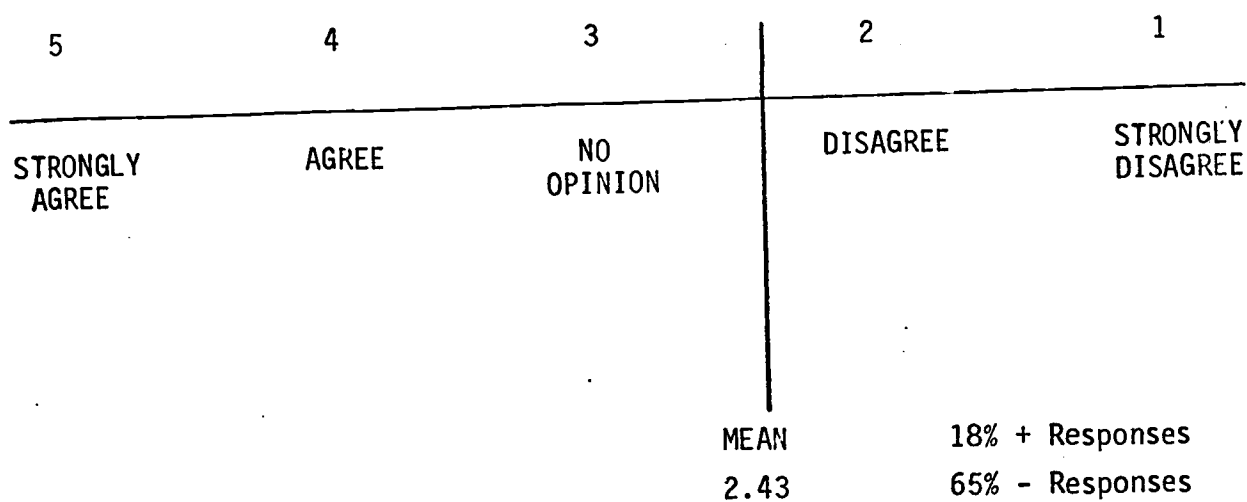


Method -7-

QUESTION 14: There was too much emphasis on things that weren't important this semester



QUESTION 15: Too much outside work was required in History this semester



Method -8-

QUESTION 16: It was too easy for the slacker to get by this semester

5	4	3	2	1
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

MEAN

2.26

11% + Responses

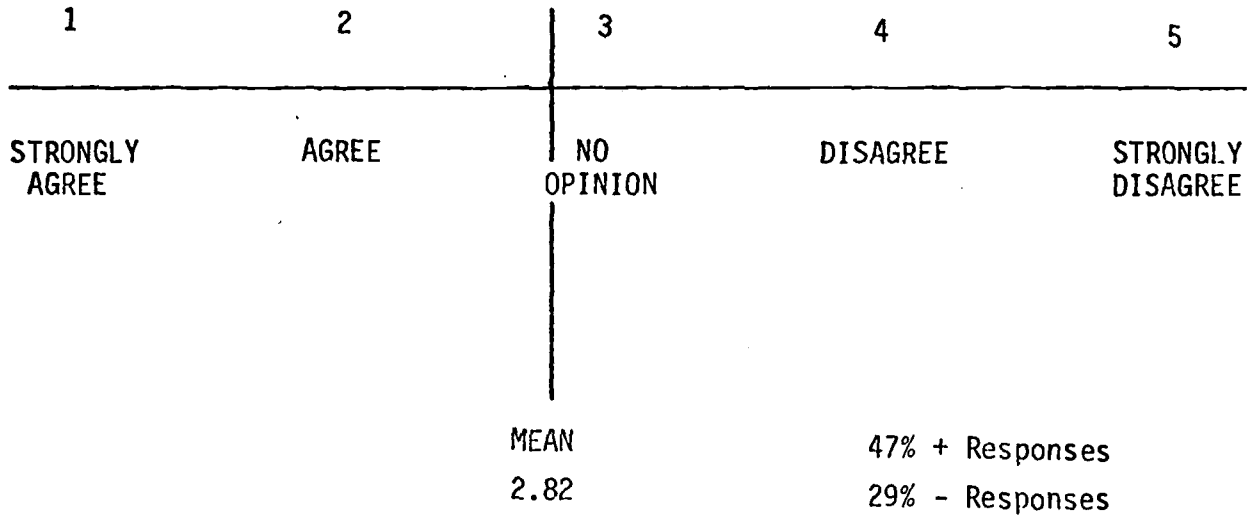
62% - Responses

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
-------------------	-------	---------------	----------	----------------------

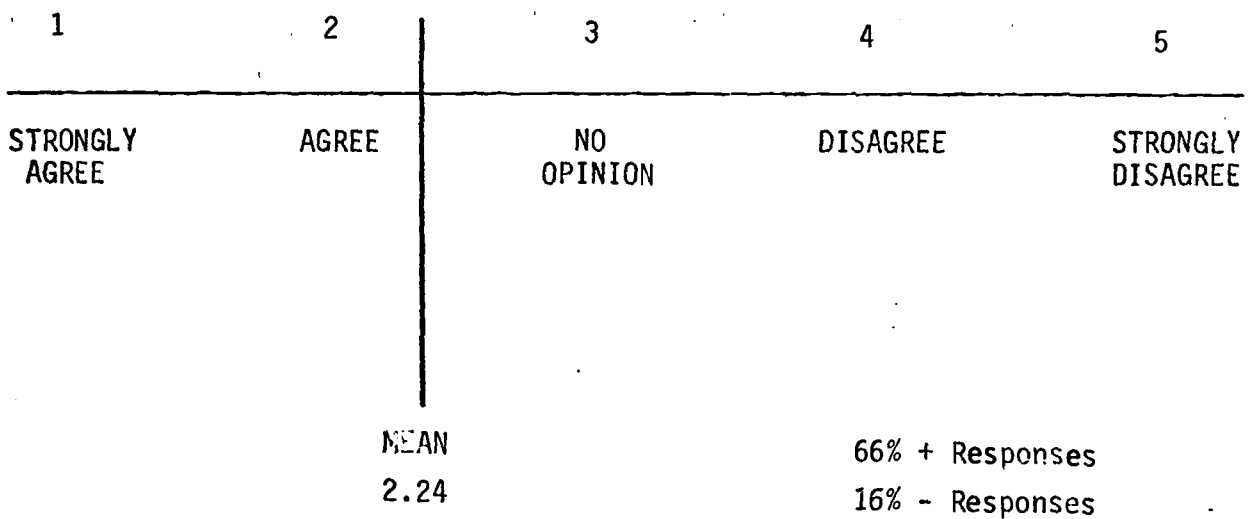


SUBJECT

QUESTION 1: This course in History should be required of all students for graduation

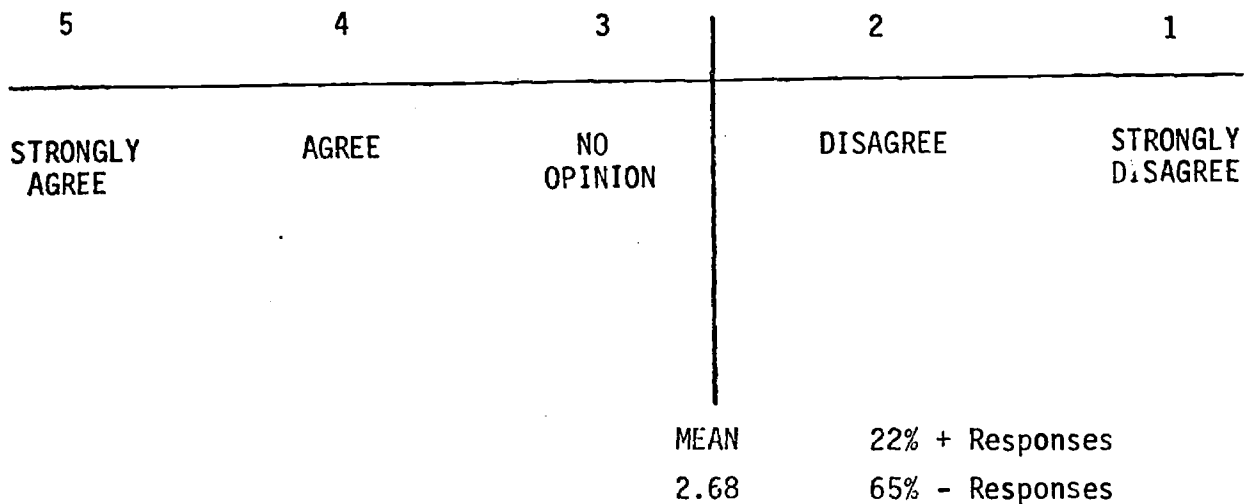


QUESTION 2: I received experience in this History class that will be valuable all my life

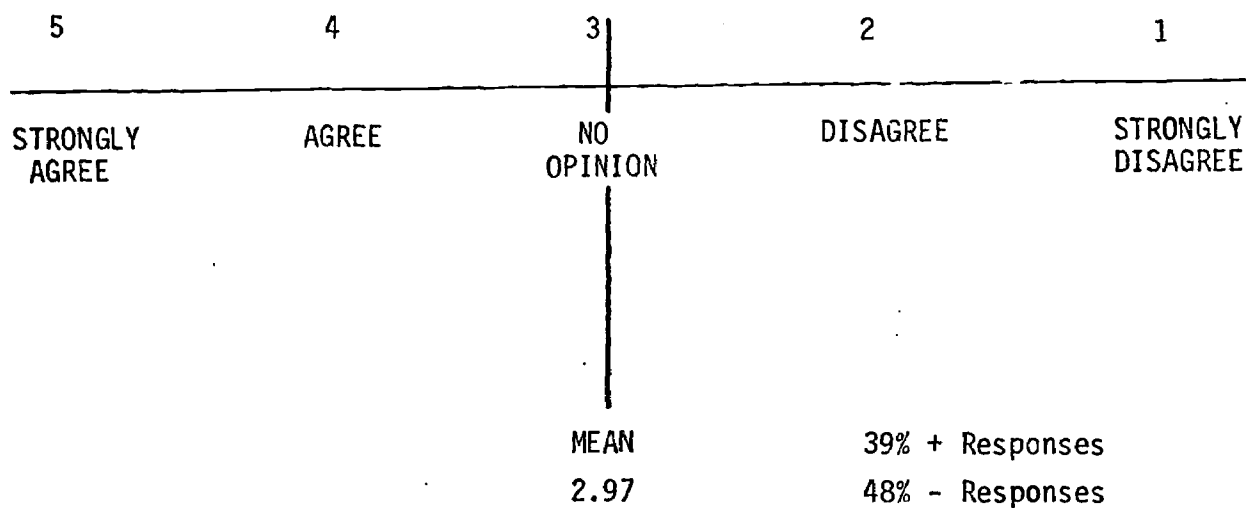


Subject -2-

QUESTION 3: This History course is only for those who need a background for teaching or who are history majors

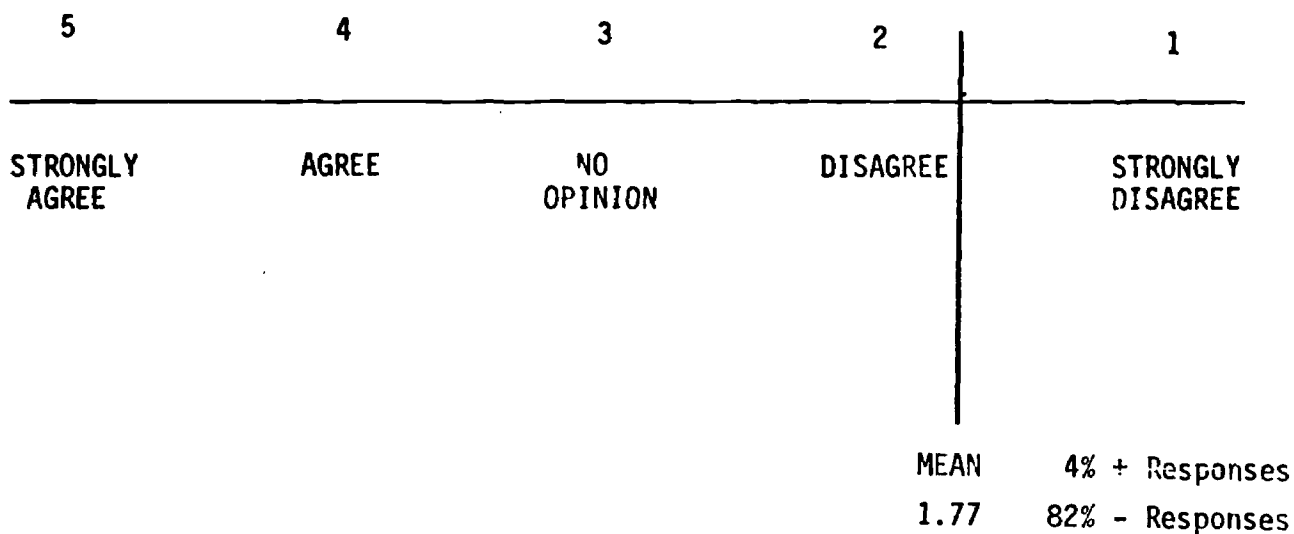


QUESTION 4: This History course gave me my first real enthusiasm for History

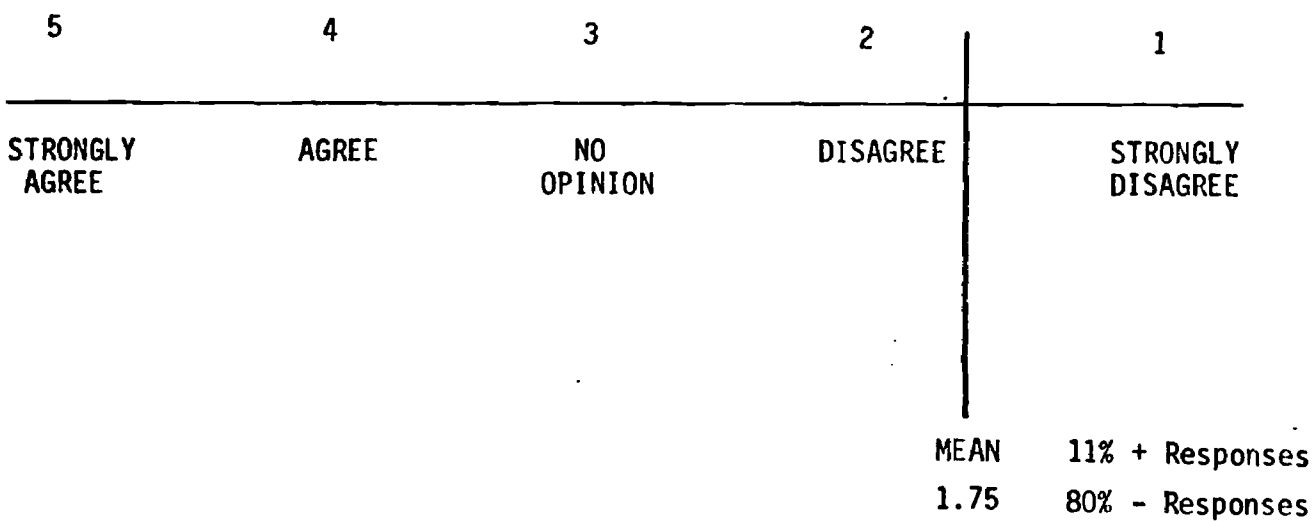


Subject -3-

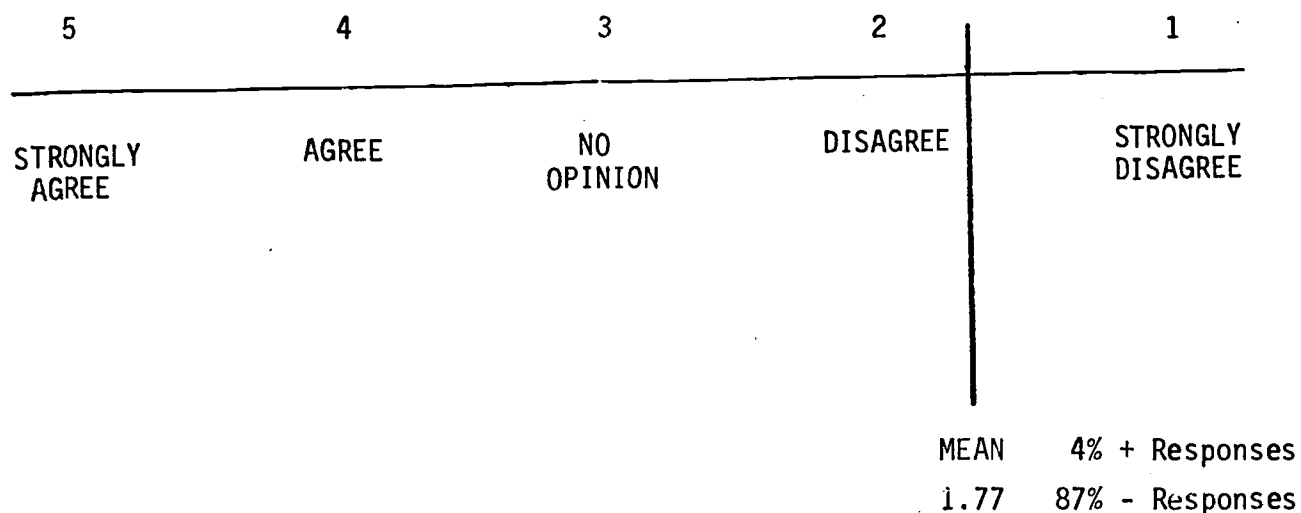
QUESTION 5: History does not teach you to think



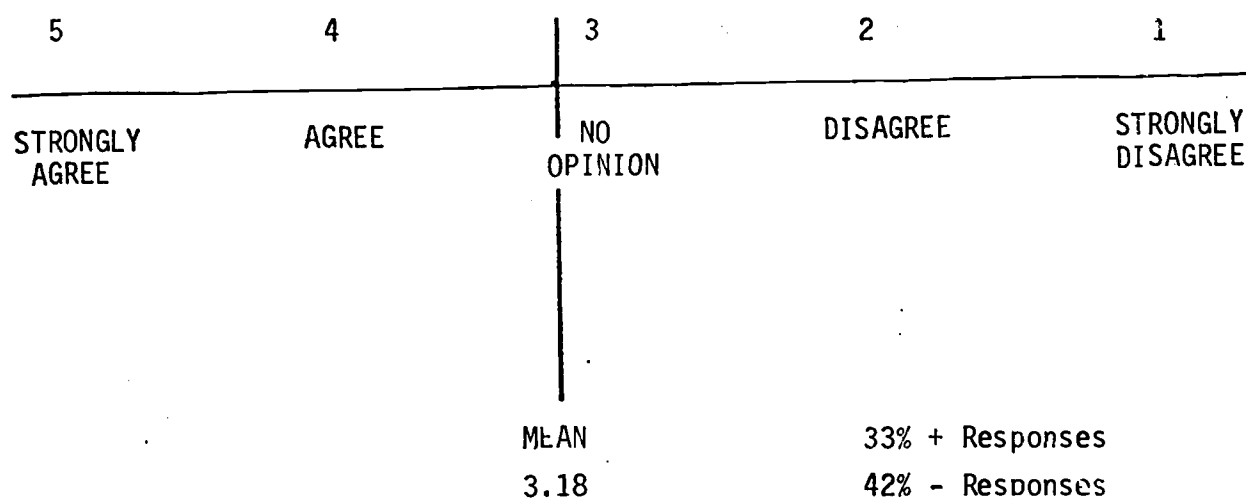
QUESTION 6: This History course should be eliminated as an offering at this university



QUESTION 7: Most projects in this History course were of little value

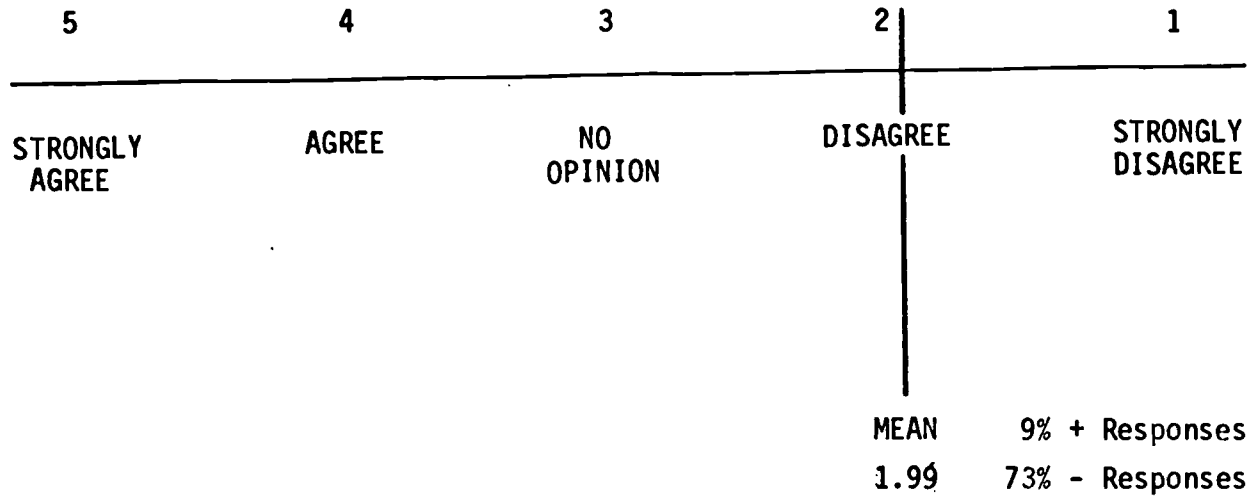


QUESTION 8: This History class is the best class at this university in which creative thinking can be taught

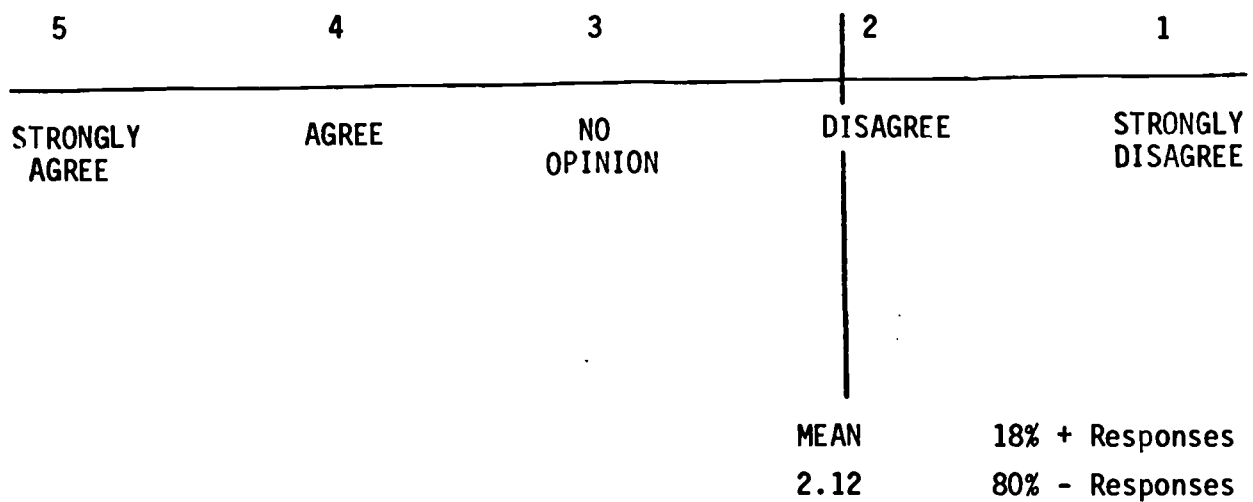


Subject - 5-

QUESTION 9: Only the brighter students benefit from this class in History

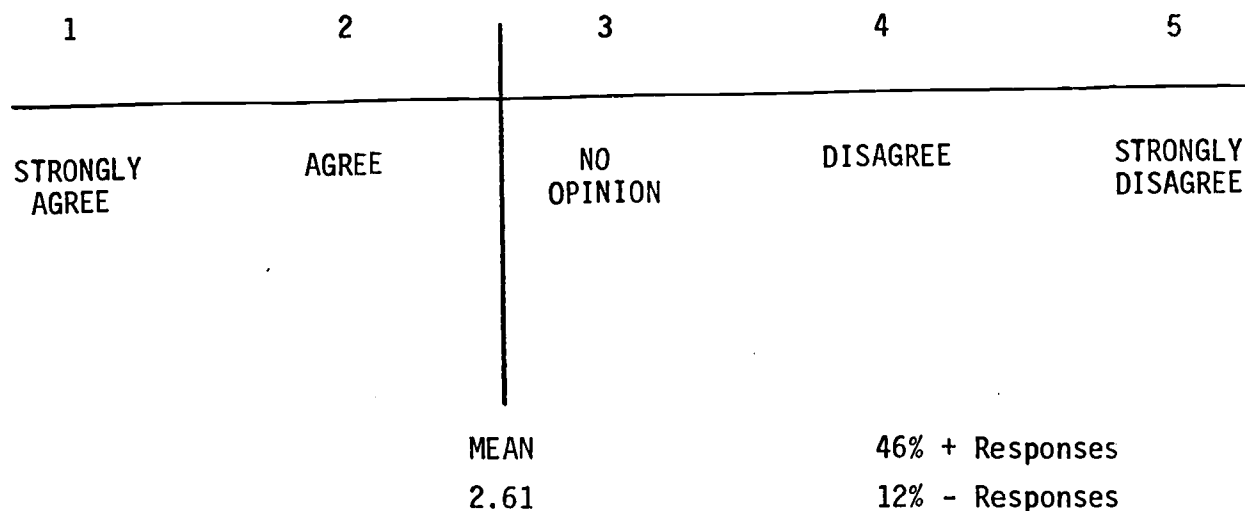


QUESTION 10: The subject matter of this History class is too mechanical and formalized

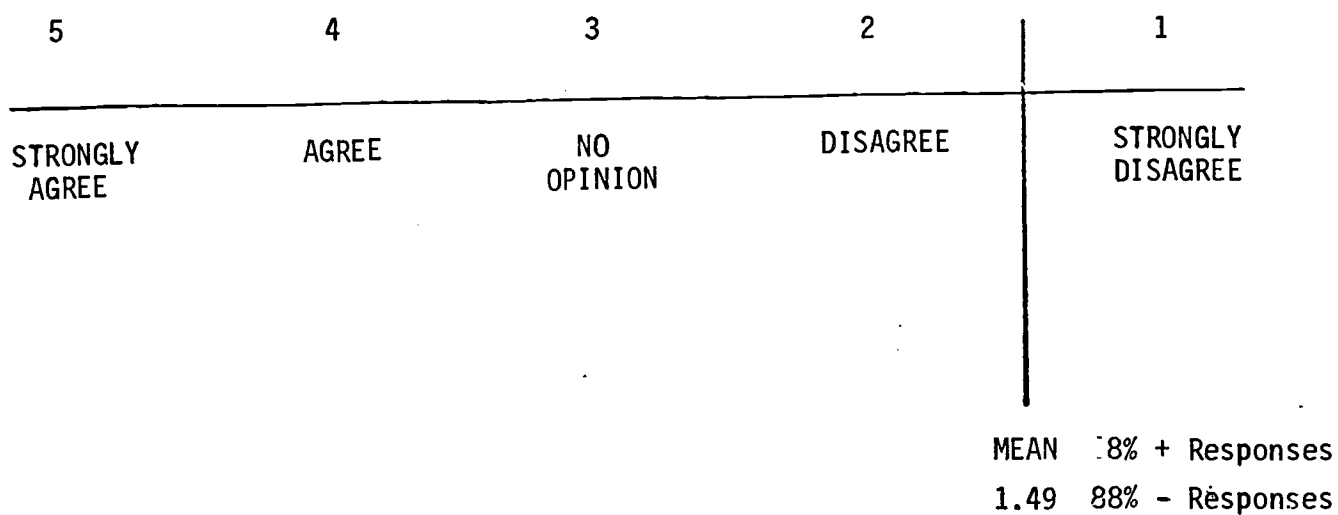


Subject -6-

QUESTION 11: This History class has improved my ability to think logically in any type of situation

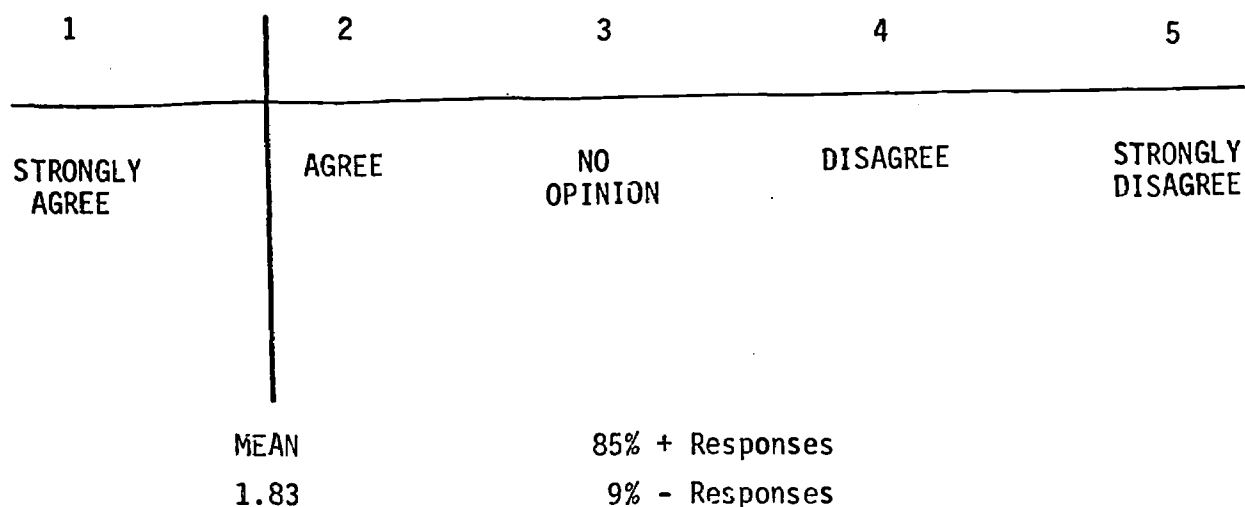


QUESTION 12: I would not recommend this course in History to anyone

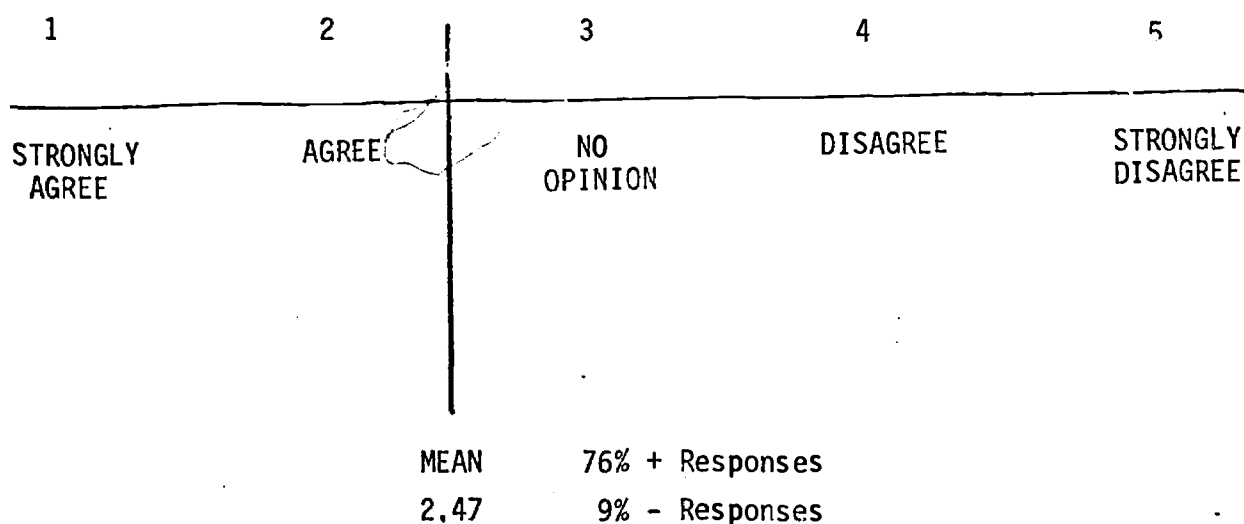


Subject -7-

QUESTION 13: This class in History has helped me to develop an appreciation of the importance of the past to the present

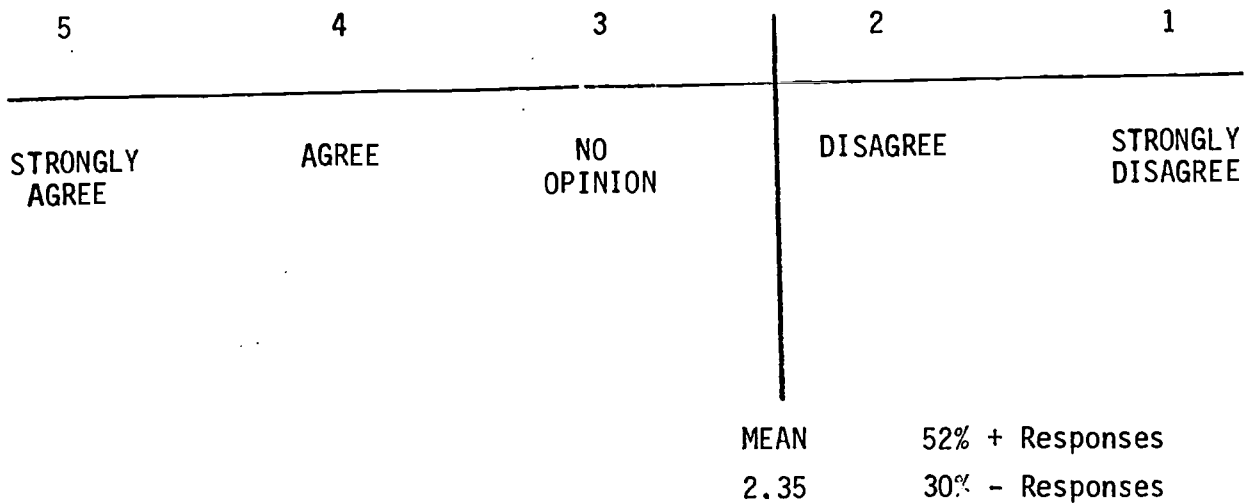


QUESTION 14: This History class has helped me appreciate the importance of History in daily living



Subject -8-

QUESTION 15: This course was excellent for the slower students who needed more repetition and prodding than most



STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NO OPINION	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
-------------------	-------	---------------	----------	----------------------